

## Section 5.2: Certification Procedures

6/2024

### 5.2.3 Identity

**References:** 7CFR 246.7 (c)(2)(i)

**Policy:** Applicants must provide proof of identity at each certification. If the applicant is an infant or child, proof of identity for the parent, foster parent, or guardian is also required.

**Purpose:** To establish the identity of the applicant.

#### Procedures

##### Certification with Proof of Identity:

1. Verify proof of identity for the applicant/participant. Paper or electronic documentation of identity, such as that displayed on a phone, is adequate. Examples of acceptable forms of proof of identity include:
  - Baptismal certificate
  - Birth certificate
  - Driver's license
  - Health benefits (insurance) card
  - Hospital crib card - *for infant only*
  - Immunization record
  - Passport
  - Pay stub
  - Phone/Online system such as MA
  - Photo ID: Acceptable forms include, but are not limited to, photo ID issued by governments (including tribal governments and governments of other countries), employers, and schools.
  - Social Security card
  - Social services benefit card
  - Valid Verification of Certification (VOC) - *for infant or child only*
  - Voter Registration card

**Additional forms of *participant identification* acceptable at re-certifications, once initial proof of identification has been documented, include:**

- Known to staff
  - WIC Card
2. Document the source of identification verified in the participant record.
  3. Proceed with the certification.

Identity of the Authorized Representative (e.g., parent/guardian) or proxy must be verified during an infant or child certification prior to issuing a WIC card and/or food benefits. See Guidance below.

Refer to Exhibit 5-C: [Identification Requirements by WIC Contact Type](#) for acceptable forms of parent/guardian or proxy identification.

## Certification without Proof of Identity

### Temporary Eligibility – pending proof

If documentation of the applicant/participant identity is not available at the certification appointment, the CPA should complete the certification process and notify the participant that their eligibility is *temporary, pending receipt of the required documentation within 30 days*.

1. Finish the certification; select “Pending Proof” in the Proof of Identification drop-down menu.
2. Issue only one month of food benefits.
3. Explain how the participant may provide the required documentation; remind them to:
  - Submit the pending proof via secure electronic platform, or
  - Return within a month with the required documentation for additional benefits.
4. Review the pending documentation when received and determine eligibility.
5. Enter the source of documentation provided into the participant record. Then delete/destroy any electronic documents received.
6. Issue food benefits if appropriate, or initiate ineligibility procedures if documentation will not be provided. See [Section 5.4: Notification of Ineligibility/Disqualification](#).

Under no circumstances may a second 30-day temporary eligibility period be allowed.

### Waiver – limited situations when a waiver may be used for lack of identification documentation

- In limited circumstances, staff may determine that the applicant is in a situation in which written documents are not available. Examples might include:
  - Fire
  - Theft
  - Disaster
  - Migrant farmworker families  
(Individuals whose principal employment is in agriculture on a seasonal basis and who establish, for the purposes of such employment, a temporary abode.)
  - Homeless individual or family

- Applicant whose spouse or partner refuses to provide identity documentation (such as a birth certificate for a child)
1. Complete the certification using “*Waiver Signed*” in the Proof of Identification drop-down menu.
  2. Generate and complete the appropriate form from the Information system, obtain signature, and import/scan the document into the Information System for all applicable household members.
  3. Assess the individual situation and issue the appropriate set(s) of food benefits that best meets the needs of the applicant.

## Guidance

- Verify the identity of the Authorized Representative (i.e., parent/guardian) or proxy at the beginning of the appointment to ensure their authorization to obtain WIC services on behalf of an infant or child.
- If the parent/guardian or proxy lacks proof of identification:
  - For initial certification: Document *pending proof of parent/guardian identification* in an alert and/or note; then follow procedural steps 2-6 outlined in “Certification without Proof of Identity” for *Temporary Eligibility – Pending Proof*.
  - For re-certification: Verify the identity verbally by following these steps:
    1. Confirm the person’s identity by cross-referencing their name with that of an adult participant, authorized representative, or proxy listed in the participant record, and
    2. Request validation of at least two of the following details:
      - The Primary Card Holder’s (PCH’s) date-of-birth,
      - The zip code of the household’s mailing address, and/or
      - The names of household members participating in WIC.
- Staff should assist applicants by suggesting ways to meet the identity requirement.
- For applicants known to staff, documentation of identity is still required at the initial certification. Staff should routinely ask, “Did you bring something with your name and address on it, such as a driver’s license or paystub?”
- Applicants do not need to be US citizens to receive WIC services and food benefits.
- One document can be used as proof for multiple areas of eligibility including identity, residency, and income. For example, a current pay stub or Phone/Online Medical Assistance verification could potentially serve as proof of identity, income, and residency if it includes all those areas and is up to date.
- Contact your State Consultant with any questions or concerns regarding identity.

## Reference – Complete Listing of Hyperlinks

SECTION 5.2.3: IDENTITIY

Section 5.4: Notification of Ineligibility/Disqualification

([https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch5/sctn5\\_4.pdf](https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/chsctns/ch5/sctn5_4.pdf))

Exhibit 5-C: Identification Requirements by WIC Contact Type

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/docs/people/wic/localagency/program/mom/exhbts/ex5/5c.pdf>)

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